



**Testimony by Dr. Louise Feroe**  
Connecticut State University System  
Before the Higher Education and  
Employment Advancement Committee  
February 8, 2011

Good morning, Senator Bye, Representative Willis and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. For the record, I am Louise Feroe, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs for the Connecticut State University System (CSUS). Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today. We are grateful for your advocacy for higher education and the difference it can make, not only for our students but for our state.

I would like to comment briefly today regarding three proposed bills that the Committee is considering.

1. House Bill 5241, *An Act Concerning Students of Public Institutions of Higher Education Living Off Campus*

The bill is directed toward students who live off-campus and rent or lease their housing from the University. Only one of the four Universities in the Connecticut State University System is impacted by this bill. For the fall semesters in each of the past two years, because of significant demands for housing, Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) has paid a daily rate to rent rooms in the Annex building at the Best Western nearby the University for about 55-58 students. In turn those student residents pay the Housing fee directly to the University for the semester. Housing assigns two Resident Assistants ("RAs") to oversee the group and holds them to the same Code of Conduct that all students, and resident students in particular, must observe. The standards are defined and enumerated in the Student Handbook. These off-campus residents would seem to meet the definition as described in this proposed bill.

2. House Bill 5415, *An Act Requiring the Informed Consent of Prospective Athletes Being Recruited to Institutions of Higher Education*

According to Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), the athletic scholarship renewal requirements and transfer policies are routinely disclosed and, in fact, a recruit is asked to sign an agreement which does so. It would appear, therefore, that the only additional obligation would be that the recruiter would have to gather routine informed consent documents for these issues.

I would say that the provision of the bill regarding "... the details of medical expenses associated with playing the sport..." is more difficult. Certainly, the requirement to carry appropriate medical insurance is discussed. But the language here is so broad that "details of medical expenses" might include any number of 'one in a million' life altering injuries with incalculable expenses. So it is difficult to imagine what might meet the intent of this sentence. It would seem that what is being sought is some additional assurance beyond a statement that playing the sport carries risks. Likely, universities would develop a statement to be signed by potential recruits that concerns risks and cost potentialities.

3. House Bill 5419, *An Act Concerning Connecticut Promise Zones*

I applaud the proponents of House Bill 5419 for bringing forth this concept. It is fashioned after the Kalamazoo Promise, a successful program that used private investments for scholarships to encourage residents of Kalamazoo to go on to college. Such a program has increased graduation rates and spurred housing growth in Kalamazoo, and helped to revitalize the region.

This proposal would allow a municipality to issue bonds to establish a trust for the purpose of scholarships for qualified students who have attended school within the municipality to attend any Connecticut public university or community college.

I support the intent of the bill – that is, to inspire those individuals who might not otherwise expect to go to college. The New England 2020 Report indicates that by the year 2020, half of the young working population (ages 25-29) in Connecticut will be from underrepresented groups and may not be adequately prepared with the education or skills necessary to be successful, contributing members of our society. This challenge will require creative approaches to develop and sustain a well educated citizenry – and the state's future depends on it.

I hope that this information is helpful to your deliberations on the proposed bills before you today. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today on behalf of Chancellor Carter and the Connecticut State University System. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.